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# *Notes on the "Lives of the Prophets."*

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(Supplementary to a paper on "A Hagiologic MS.," &c., in the last Journal.)

IT has long been known that the "Lives of the Prophets," of which certainly three Greek recensions are now known, is a work extant in Syriac. Only the lives of the "four greater prophets," Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel, have been printed; viz., by Nestle in his Syriac Grammar and Chrestomathy, in the Petermann-Reuther series, "Porta Linguarum Orientalium," Carlsruhe and Leipzig, 1881. It is there to be found on pages 53–61 (of those numbered with Syriac numerals). Nestle derived his text "e tribus codicibus Musei Britannici," but he does not give the variant readings of the three codices. A comparison of Nestle's text with the Greek recension, which I published in the last Journal of this Society, shows that *this recension* and the Syriac are the same treatise, the Greek being a translation and the Syriac the original. Naturally there are some variants; and perhaps those of the codices mentioned above might help us in determining the true text. The rendering is quite close, although idiomatic. It should be stated that other Syriac manuscripts of the same composition are known to our American missionaries, as extant near Oroomiah, in Persia.

The following rough comparison is intended merely to show the coincidences and differences between the Greek text just mentioned and the Syriac text of Nestle.

*Title:* The same in both Syriac and Greek, except that the former adds "holy" as an epithet of the prophets, and for καὶ ποῦ κεῖνται has ܘܐܝܟܢܐ ܡܝܬܘ, "and how they died." The Syriac title commences with the ordinary ܣܦܪ, which, of course, would be neglected in Greek. After the title, also, the Syriac inserts "Of holy Epiphanius bishop of Cyprus."

(For the rest of the comparison I shall refer to the Greek by its lines and pages as published in the Journal.)

*Page* 29, *line* 1. — Syriac *omits* ὁ προφήτης, and has "Jerusalem" for Ἰσραήλ.

*Line* 2. — Syr. *adds* "with a wood-saw" after εἰς δύο. — For δρυός, ῥωγῆν Syr. ܪܘܓܠ ܒܪܘܬܡ, "terebinth of Rogel"; as if the Greek had made a slip in copying from an older MS. δρυὸς Ρωγήλ, the

probable correction, makes far better sense than the present reading, besides keeping exactly to the Syriac.

*Lines* 3, 4. — Syr. *omits* ὁ βασιλεύς.

(*Line* 5, ὀλιγωρήσας stands for ܠܐ ܨܒܐ.)

(*Page* 30, *line* 1, καὶ ἐπὶ stands for ܥܠ ܗܘ.)

(*Line* 6. — καὶ *seems* omitted in the Syr., but only by a difference of idiom.)

*Line* 7. — For Ἡσαΐας, ἄφνω, Syriac has "the Jews."

*Line* 8. — Syr. *omits* ἦλθον and ἐξήρχετο τὸ ὕδωρ.

*Lines* 9, 10. — Syr. *omits* κατὰ . . . Ἰουδαίοις.

*Line* 11. — Syr. *adds* τὸ μυστήριον before γέγονεν.

*Line* 12. — Syr. has a pronoun in place of τοῦ Σιλωάμ.

*Line* 13. — For ὡσαύτως Syr. has "also after his death."

(*Lines* 14, 15, ἐχόμενα τῆς ὁδοῦ stands for ܥܡ ܕܪܟܐ.)

(*Lines* 20, 21, the Syriac uses an expanded phrase with two different words to express concealment: "unknown to the many of the people, but hidden from all the people," in a style which the Greek could express but awkwardly by repeating ἀγνοούμενον.)

(*Line* 22, ἐξ Αἰθιοπίας is ܡܢ ܐܬܝܘܦܝܐ in Syr.)

*Line* 23. — Syr. *omits* τοῖς Βαβυλωνίοις.

(*Line* 26, For ἄκαρπον, Syr. has "that he should not bear (fruit) sons.")

*Lines* 26, 27, For ἡμέρας Syr. has ὥρας, and *omits* καὶ ἐπέκεινα.

(*Line* 30, τῆς Κήσεως is ܕܩܝܣ in Syr.)

*Line* 31. — Syr. has γὰρ after Ηὔξατο. — ὀλοθρεύουσαι αὐτοὺς seems to be omitted in the Syr., but may have its explanation in the next:

*Line* 32. — For ἀπέθανον Syr. has ܐܬܒܥܕ ܡܢ ܒܝܬ ܡܠܟܐ, "fled from them."

*Line* 33. — For ἐφώθ Syr. has (more correctly) ܢܦܚ (νεφώθ).

— After κροκοδίλους, Syr. adds, "but the Syrians ܫܪܝ ܒܝܬ ܣܘܪܝܐ."

*Line* 35. — For ἀπίστων Syr. reads ἀσπίδων (as I conjectured the reading might be — see foot note), and adds "and crocodiles," using the Syriac word just quoted, therefor.

*Line* 36. — After θεραπεύουσιν Syr. *adds* "And many of the crocodiles also he made flee from the waters."

*Page* 31, *line* 4. — For περιθεὶς αὐτὰ ἐνδόξως κύκλῳ Syr. has "laid

them up with reverence" (or honor); but the difference might be made either by the change of a letter or two, or by the addition of a word. — Syr. *omits* οὕτως.

*Line* 5. — After ἐκείνης, Syr. *adds* "in which he was buried."

*Line* 6. — For ὅταν Syr. reads ὡσαύτως (making much better sense, and clearing up the obscurity).

*Line* 9. — For Ἄργους δεξιοῦ Syr. has ܕܐܪܓܘ. Syr. also *omits* λεὰν . . . ἀνατολικόν, and begins a new paragraph after the word just quoted.

*Line* 12. — Syr. *omits* διὰ Σωτῆρος Θεοῦ κ.τ.λ. to the end of the sentence.

*Line* 14. — For Καὶ ἕως Syr. has Διὰ τοῦτο ἕως.

*Lines* 14, 15. — The Syr. makes both παρθένον and βρέφος objects of τιθέντες, but by a pronoun makes προσκυνοῦσιν refer to βρέφος alone.

*Line* 18. — For λαοῦ Syr. has ܕܝܢܐ = ναοῦ; a much better reading. The error of the Greek is plain, and that of a *copyist.*

*Line* 20. — For ἐν Syr. has ܒ = ἐκ, doubtless the correct reading.

*Line* 21. — Syr. *omits* νομοθετήσαι ἐν Σιών.

*Line* 25. — For ἱερέων προφήτων Syr. has "neither of the priests nor of the prophets." — For ἐκλεκτὸς Syr. has "servant"; but the mistake would be easy if the Syr. were carelessly written.

*Lines* 30, 31. — τοῦ προφήτου replaced in Syr. by a pronoun.

*Line* 32. — Syr. *omits* φωτεινῇ.

*Line* 36. — Syr. supplies φωτείνη in brackets after νεφέλη. — Syr. omits περὶ τὸν τόπον.

*Page* 32, *line* 2. — Syr. *omits* διὰ τοῦτο.

*Line* 4. — Syr. *omits* καὶ Ἀαρών.

*Line* 6. — Syr. *omits* οὗτος, and *adds* γῆς before Σαιρᾶ; also, for the last has Sarîda (ܣܥܝܪܐ).

(*Line* 7, Syr. *adds* καὶ *before* πολλὰ — idiomatically.)

*Line* 11. — For Σήθ Syr. has Shem.

*Lines* 11–13. — Syr. transposes the last two clauses of the sentence that ends with Σάρας.

*Line* 14. — Syr. would put a stop after ἐπιπέδου, and begin the next sentence thus: ὑπερῶον γὰρ καὶ ἔστιν.

*Line* 15. — Syr. shows that κεκρυμμένον should be κεκράμενον; and

the preceding *ἐν πέτρᾳ* should therefore probably be *ἐπὶ πέτρᾳ*, or some similar expression.

*Lines* 15, 16. — For *ὅτε . . . ἐρημώσεως* Syr. has ܘܟܕ ܐܬܥܕ ܠܡܫܚܬ ܘܫܥܬ ܠܡܚܨܕ; "that when it has failed they shall await the sickle of desolation." The Greek evidently represents a somewhat different reading; apparently a mistake in reading one or two Syriac letters.

(*Line* 18, *πλημμερήσει* of the MS. is ܒܡܫܚܬ in the Syr.)

*Line* 21. — The *μίαν τάρωσιν* of the MS. is ܕܠܐ ܢܬܪܥܘ, "lest they should rebel"; affording the correction of the Greek to *μὴ ἀνταρῶσιν* (compare *ἄνταρσις* and cognates). Syr. also *omits τοῖς Ἑβραίοις*.

*Lines* 21, 22. — For *ἀναίρεσιν*, Syr. has "as if they would kill them." Some particle or preposition appears to be omitted by the Greek copyist.

*Line* 22. — Syr. *omits ὁ προφήτης*.

*Line* 27. — For *τοῖς Χαλδαίοις Syr.* has ܠܟܫܕܝܐ.

*Line* 29. — Syr. omits *οὐρανόθεν*, and puts *τότε* in the preceding sentence. For *ἐλεγεν ὁ Ἰσραήλ*, Syr. has *ἔλεγον* (3d pers. plur.).

*Lines* 30, 31. — For *τῶν νεκρῶν* Syr. has "dry."

*Line* 32. — Syr. has *αἰῶνος* expressed before *μέλλοντος*; but the sense is the same.

*Lines* 33, 34. — For *τὰ ἐν Ἱερουσαλὴμ κ.τ.λ.* to the end of the sentence, Syr. has "that which was to be wrought in Jerusalem and in the midst of the temple; he was snatched from thence and came to Jerusalem for the admonition of those that do not believe" (*omitting θεῷ*).

*Line* 35. — Syr. *omits καὶ τὴν πύλην* to the end of the sentence (on next page, *τὰ ἔθνη*), and has in their place, "As also Daniel said that it would be built."

*Page* 33, *line* 5. — For *τὰ κτήνη αὐτῶν πάντα*, Syr. has ܟܠ ܒܢܝܗܘܢ ܘܟܠ ܩܢܝܢܗܘܢ, i.e., "all their infants and their possessions" (or, flocks).

*Line* 10. — For *οὗτος* the Syr. has the name, "Daniel."

*Line* 11. — Syr. *omits ἐν τῇ αἰχμαλωσίᾳ*.

(*Line* 12. — Syr. has ܒܝܬ ܐܠ for *Βεθώρῳ*.)

*Lines* 14, 15. — Syr. *omits* τὸν λαὸν καὶ ἐπὶ, and also omits Ἱερουσαλήμ.

*Lines* 15, 16. — For καὶ ἐν νηστείας κ.τ.λ. to end of sentence, Syr. has "and in fasting he made himself a Nazarite (נזיר) from all desirable food."

*Line* 17. — For ξηρὸς . . . τὴν εἰδέαν Syr. has "small (or, spare) in body."

(*Lines* 20–24, Syr. has much inversion of words, but nothing really different. For ἄλογον φιληδονίαν Syr. has "love of pleasures (or, lusts) of the body"; and for Βελίαρ, "Satan.")

*Line* 25. — Syr. omits the whole line.

*Lines* 27–29. — Syr. seems to omit ἄρχοντες καὶ, to reverse exactly the position of the next three words, and to omit ἀσεβοῦντες . . . ἀπολαμβάνοντες.

(*Lines* 29 ff. — There is much minor change of structure, but always close rendering of the sense.)

*Line* 34. — For ἐπεγίνετο δὲ αὐτῷ, Syr. has "And he was in the likeness of behemoth."

(*Line* 35. — For γλώσσα Syr. has "speech," *omitting* τοῦ μὴ λαλεῖν.)

*Line* 36. — Syr. *omits* νεκρὸν.

*Page* 34, *line* 1. — Syr. supplies μόνος after Δανιὴλ.

*Line* 4. — For καὶ τότε ὄψομαι αὐτόν, Syr. has "And they did not believe him."

*Lines* 5, 6. — Syr. *omits* προσευχόμενος . . . ὕψιστον.

*Lines* 7, 8. — Syr. would have a (slight) mark of punctuation after ἐτελέσθη, and none after αὐτῷ; for ἓξ it has ἑπτὰ; and would finish the sentence at ἔτη. Then it has ἓξ for πέντε, and no stop after μήνας.

*Line* 11. — For ἐξομολογούμενος τῷ Κυρίῳ Syr. has "in the time of his repentance."

*Line* 15. — Syr. adds Δανιὴλ after ὅσιος.

*Line* 16. — It appears that a full stop should follow ἀπεριτμήτων (the next sentence extending to ἔγραψα, in line 18).

*Line* 17. — Removes stop after βασιλεῦσιν, and *adds* "of Persia" at that place.

*Lines* 21–29. — There is some difference of order, and some omission. The Syriac reads (beginning after Βαβυλῶνος) "But when it burns like fire, it is the end of all the earth. But if waters flow down from the south, the people will return to their land. But if blood flow down, there will be a murder of Satan in all the earth. And the holy Daniel slept in peace."

The critical instinct sees without much difficulty that variants must exist in the Syriac sources which would explain some of the now-seeming superabundant matter of the Greek. It seems quite superfluous to enter into an argument to prove the truth of the position here taken, viz., that the Syriac is the original and the Greek a translation. That is obvious throughout — at least to one who takes the trouble to read them through and compare them.

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Since preparing the above note I have been shown a "Beschreibung der syrischen Handschrift 'Sachau 131' auf der Königlichen Bibliothek zu Berlin," by Prof. Friedrich Baethgen (in Zeitschrift f. d. alttest. Wiss., Jahrgang 6, 1886) of Kiel, in which is some portion of the "Prophetenleben von Epiphanius von Cypern." That Sachau MS. appears, in sundry particulars, to have been derived from the same source as some of those newly acquired by the Union Theological Seminary, as may be seen by comparing my brief account of them, heretofore published, with Baethgen's description. But the point here to be noted is that Baethgen assumes the Greek (he seems not to know of the different character of the recensions) to be the original, and the Syriac the translation. This would be the case, of course, were the Greek the production of Epiphanius of Cyprus. But the Greek appears to be one of the documents which Dorotheus of Tyre translated from the "Hebrew," which, at that time, would be one of the Aramaic languages; and, as appears by the facts, the Syriac. (See the references to Migne, in my article on "A Hagiologic MS.," &c.) Had Baethgen read the different texts in Migne, to say nothing of the Philadelphia text, he would perhaps have modified his statement (*ubi supra*, p. 199) "Von diesen [Greek] Texten, soweit sie mir bekannt sind, weicht die syrische Uebersetzung nicht unwesentlich ab."

Still later — "The Book of the Bee," just issued by the Clarendon Press, Oxford, contains a Syriac recension of a portion of the "Lives of the Prophets" different from that in Nestle. This new complication of the question I have no time to work out.

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In the same "Beschreibung" Baethgen gives the Syriac text of the "Revelation of Ezra," of which I published a translation in the Presbyterian Quarterly about a year ago. I have at present no copy of either the text or my translation, with which to compare Baethgen's text and translation, but they are obviously the same thing, and, further, from the same source, and that not remotely.